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Dear Colleagues,

Re: changes to Avian precipitins and Farmer's Lung precipitins testing

We have been informed by Virology and Immunology laboratory at the Cumberland Infirmary, where these tests are performed, several changes have had to be made to their testing panel. This is due to the supplier permanently withdrawing reagents and the very limited availability of alternatives.

These are the changes to testing we have been informed of from Virology and Immunology laboratory at the Cumberland Infirmary:

- *Avian precipitin testing by Counter-immunoelectrophoresis (CIE) is no longer available.*
- Avian Precipitin panel now consists of:
- *Pigeon serum antigen specific IgG*
 - *Budgie mix antigen specific IgG (serum, feathers, droppings)*
 - *Parrot Mix antigen specific IgG (serum, feathers, droppings) – specific requests only*

Due to the mixed-antigen nature of the budgie specific IgG assay, we expect this test to show a reduced clinical specificity for Bird breeder's lung compared to the previous budgie serum-only CIE test. The pigeon serum specific IgG (part of our existing avian panel) is a more specific assay for Bird breeder's lung as it does not contain feather or faecal antigens. A comparison of the performance of these methods in the evaluation of suspected Bird breeder's lung Hypersensitivity pneumonitis is currently under way.

M. Faeni testing continues to be done by CIE using an alternative reagent that has given 100% concordance with results generated with the previous suppliers reagents.

Yours faithfully



Elizabeth Bateman

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